

Cling to life. Stories of travels and hopes.

Liceo J.Sannazaro - Napoli



INTRODUCTION

Vivere una sola vita ... è prigionia

Avere un solo amico ... è prigionia

Conoscere una sola lingua ... è prigionia

Avere un solo corpo ... è prigionia"

NDJOCK NGANA

This work, as a result of a process undertaken by the pupils of the "Liceo J. Sannazaro" since 2016, aims to report immigration experiences in Italy, choosing a "bottom-up" point of view. We use the instrument of interview to tell our experience born from more or less casual contacts with women and young people who have come from far away.

We preferred to focus on a specific segment, which, according to us, is one of the most at risk and most discriminated: minors and women from Africa. Knowing their stories was first of all a beautiful experience, because it opened our eyes to what we often perceive as an indistinct world so far from us, which instead constitutes an enormous continent with many differences and even contrasts. Secondly, it allowed us to overcome the wall of indifference, which makes us pass by many people as if they were invisible or as if their sufferings could be considered an ineluctable destiny.

Currently, international policies do not seem able to take care of the migrants' problems. In host countries, such as Italy, selfish and xenophobic forces have taken over, often legitimized by political forces. The Italian government does much to save the lives of migrants at sea, but for them, once landed, start problems just as serious: it weighs not only deafness and European cynicism, but also the inability to go beyond the hospitalization - however problematic - in reception centers. Beyond a roof and a meal, it is necessary to insist on the training and work paths, to give migrants the possibilities of integration in the country in which they arrived.

In our country there are old and new discriminations, more or less obvious, in various areas, school, health, housing. It is very difficult for many people

who were born in Italy and consider our country their land to get the recognition of citizenship. Furthermore, mixed marriages represent a challenge of intercultural coexistence within European families; incorrect and simplistic interpretations of statistical data see most immigrants as dangerous offenders. All this is the result of the inability to implement a common policy for citizens and immigrants, which creates social cohesion and promotes growth.

The "moderate" idea of less immigrants thinking of their inclusion as a reserve labor force to be reduced to the needs of the receiving country, neglecting the subjective rights and prospects of social and political participation, is the theorization of attitudes present not only in everyday life, but also in certain television programs, newspapers and political debates. This is a dangerous consideration for two reasons: first of all, because this is how the founding values Europe and its most significant tradition are denied; secondly, because such a conception is destined to cause increasing opposition and prejudices, instead of favoring, social cohesion.

Nonetheless, in the arduous journey of multicultural Italy there are numerous and interesting positive experiences, which see Italians and immigrants collaborating for a common goal. Sometimes we talk about it, many others do not, or in a distorted way. Here the world of communication comes back into question, not only in the media, but also in the web, bearing in mind that the internet often becomes the place for ordinary people, in which to give rise to attitudes of xenophobia and racism, especially if religious differences also come into play. After all, it is not with Islamophobia and with the rejection of mosques that we can undermine fundamentalism, but with the involvement of all religions in the struggle against extremism.

We hope that this text can provide food for thought to safeguard and enhance the best of European tradition.

Programma Erasmus KA219 - "Non limiti ma frontiere: i movimenti migratori dal passato ai giorni nostri"



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CAP.1 ABOUT THE EXISTENTIAL CONDITION OF MIGRANT WOMEN

ALONG THE MIGRANTS ROUTES....

The causes of departure

There are more and more people who leave their country to escape from internal guerrillas, hunger, despair, torture and violence.

In the attempt to seek a better life elsewhere, however, they are often victims of the so-called "human beings merchants" and face a journey without any respect for the dignity of man.

The journey

After months of traveling across Africa, migrants arrive in Libya to cross the Mediterranean and become trapped by traffickers and smugglers who have a monopoly on illegal trafficking to Europe and decide on routes and fares.

Most of those who emigrate cannot swim and are unaware of the serious dangers they face: many of them, in fact, drown at sea.

Among them there is a very high number of women and children, the latter often without parents. Women without a husband are systematically raped.

Arrival in Italy

The system of reception of migrants in Italy is made up of first reception facilities - hotspots and regional hubs managed by local Prefectures - and second reception facilities, referable to the so-called SPRAR (Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees) which reports to the Ministry of the Interior.

Under international law, each country has a duty to accept asylum seekers until the refugee status is confirmed or refused. The territorial commissions for the recognition of international protection should hold the hearing for the granting of asylum within 30 days from the submission of the application and decide in the following 3 days.

In Italy, however, the waiting period averages around 12 months and this is one of the critical points, with direct effects on the time spent in reception centers even for those who would not have the right to protection.

Trafficking in women

When we reflect on the condition of women who are victims of trafficking, we must not speak of prostitution but of slavery and exploitation.

Among the migrants we note the presence of many women, often very young, pregnant or already accompanied by their children, for whom the trip is a mortifying and devastating experience. We know with certainty, through the multiple testimonies collected over time, that the majority has suffered all kinds of abuse, first of all sexual, from the traffickers in whom they came across and of whom, frequently, they become pregnant.

And that's not all. Many women manage to reach Europe because they are included in a specific trafficking in human beings: sexual exploitation.

80% of Nigerian women arriving in Italy (more than 1200 only in 2014) are already destined for this life: one in three women in Benin City, Nigeria, is approached by local traffickers who promise a job opportunity or study in Europe and so is moved away from the family imagining to meet a better future.

According to Palermo's "Pellegrino della Terra" association, which deals with helping women victims of slavery, the trip costs around 60,000 - 70,000 euros: a debt that is established through a real contract signed before a lawyer, who binds the single girl but also the whole family.

Furthermore, before departure, women are subjected to the voodoo ritual, a sort of spiritual protection that becomes, however, at a later stage, a true moral imprisonment because the girls who try at some point to rebel against those who have reduced them in conditions of slavery become victims of

serious threats, often addressed also to their families.

Once they arrive in Italy, at the end, the women are delivered to the "Madame" that appear as figures of reference and protection, but which are in fact just another pawn in the criminal organization and take care of their exploitation: thus begins the condition of real slavery of migrants, in a state of great isolation and marginality.

SUR LES ROUTES DES MIGRANTS...

Les causes du départ

Elles sont nombreuses de plus en plus les gens qui abandonnent le propre pays pour fuir de guérillas intérieures, faim, désespoir, tortures et violences.

Souvent, cependant, dans la tentative de chercher une vie meilleure ailleurs, ils sont par contre victime des "marchant" soi-disant d'êtres humains et ils affrontent un voyage sans quelques-uns respect pour la dignité de l'homme.

Le voyage

Après mois de voyage en Afrique, les migrants arrivent en Libye pour traverser la Méditerranée et ils deviennent proie de trafiquants et passeurs qu'ils ont le monopole du trafic illégal vers l'Europe et qui décident routes et tarifs.

La plus grande partie de ceux qui émigrent ne sait pas nager et il est inconscient des dangers graves lequel il va rencontrer : nombreux d'eux, en effet, ils noient en mer.

Parmi eux il y a un haut numéro de femmes et enfants, ces derniers souvent sans parents.

Les femmes sans mari sont violentées systématiquement.

L'arrivée en Italie

Le système d'accueil des migrants en Italie est constitué par structures d'accueil premier les hotspot et les hubs régionaux gérés par les Préfectures locales - et structures de second accueil, reconductibles au soi-disant SPRAR, Système de Protection pour Requérants Asile et Réfugiés, qu'il fait

tête au Ministère de l'intérieur.

Selon le droit international, chaque Pays a le devoir d'accueillir les requérants asile jusqu'à la vérification - ou au refus - du status de réfugié. Les commissions territoriales pour la reconnaissance de la protection internationale devraient dérouler l'audition pour la concession de l'asile d'ici 30 jours de la présentation de la question et décider dans les 3 jours suivants.

En Italie, cependant, la période d'attente rôde autour des 12 mois en moyenne et ceci est un des points critiques, avec des effets directs sur les temps de séjour dans les centres d'accueil aussi pour celui qui n'aurait pas droit à la protection.

La traite des femmes

Quand nous réfléchissons sur la condition des femmes victimes de la traite, nous ne devons pas parler de prostitution mais d'esclavage et exploitation.

Entre les migrants nous remarquons la présence de beaucoup de femmes, souvent jeunettes, en état de grossesse ou vous déjà accompagnées par leurs fils pour qui est une expérience mortifiante et ravageuse. Nous savons avec certitude, à travers les témoignages multiples recueillis dans le temps qui a tout de suite chaque type d'abus, avant tout sexuel, de la part des trafiquants en lesquels sont tombées et de qui, elles restent enceintes fréquemment.

Et celui-ci n'est pas tout. Beaucoup de femmes réussissent à atteindre l'Europe parce que vous insérez dans un trafic spécifique d'êtres humains, ce de la traite et de l'exploitation sexuelle.

80% des femmes nigériennes qui arrive en Italie, plus de 1200 dans le seul 2014 est déjà destiné à cette vie : une femme sur trois au Benin City, en Nigeria, est approchée par trafiquants locaux qui promettent une opportunité de travail ou étude en Europe et elle est éloignée si de la famille en imaginant d'aller rencontre à un avenir meilleur.

Selon l'association "Pèlerin" de la Terre de Palerme, qu'il s'occupe d'aider les femmes victimes de l'esclavage, le voyage il a un coût qu'il rôde aux autour 60.000 - 70.000 sirocco : une dette qu'il vient établi à travers un

contrat véritable signé devant à un avocat, que la fille unique lie mais aussi toute la famille.

Avant du départ, les femmes sont soumises au rite en outre, Voodoo, une sorte de protection spirituelle qui devient cependant, dans une seconde phase, un vrai asservissement moral parce que les filles qui cherchent à un certain point de se rebeller à qui les a réduites en conditions d'esclavage ils deviennent victimes de menaces graves, souvent révoltes aussi aux propres membres de la famille.

Une fois arrivée en Italie, finalement, les femmes sont remises à des "madame" qui apparaissent comme illustrations de référence et protection, mais qu'en réalité elles sont seulement un autre pion à l'intérieur de l'organisation criminelle et qui s'occupent de leur exploitation : il commence ainsi la condition d'esclavage véritable des migrants dans un état de grand isolement et marginalité.

SULLE ROTTE DEI MIGRANTI....

Le cause della partenza

Sono sempre più numerose le persone che abbandonano il proprio paese per fuggire da guerriglie interne, fame, disperazione, torture e violenze.

Spesso, tuttavia, nel tentativo di cercare altrove una vita migliore, sono invece vittime dei cosiddetti "mercanti di esseri umani" e affrontano un viaggio senza alcun rispetto per la dignità dell'uomo.

Il viaggio

Dopo mesi di viaggio in Africa, i migranti arrivano in Libia per attraversare il Mediterraneo e diventano preda di trafficanti e scafisti che hanno il monopolio del traffico illegale verso l'Europa e decidono rotte e tariffe.

La maggior parte di coloro che emigrano non sa nuotare ed è inconsapevole dei gravi pericoli cui va incontro: molti di essi, infatti, annegano in mare. Tra di loro vi è un altissimo numero di donne e bambini, questi ultimi spesso senza genitori. Le donne senza marito vengono sistematicamente violentate.

L'arrivo in Italia

Il sistema di accoglienza dei migranti in Italia è costituito da strutture di prima accoglienza [gli hotspot e gli hub regionali gestiti dalle Prefetture locali - e strutture di seconda accoglienza, riconducibili al cosiddetto SPRAR (Sistema di Protezione per Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati) che fa capo al Ministero dell'Interno.

Secondo il diritto internazionale, ciascun Paese ha il dovere di accogliere i richiedenti asilo fino all'accertamento - o al diniego - dello status di rifugiato. Le commissioni territoriali per il riconoscimento della protezione internazionale dovrebbero svolgere l'audizione per la concessione dell'asilo entro 30 giorni dalla presentazione della domanda e decidere nei successivi 3 giorni.

In Italia, tuttavia, il periodo di attesa si aggira mediamente attorno ai 12 mesi e questo è uno dei punti critici, con effetti diretti sui tempi di permanenza nei centri di accoglienza anche per chi non avrebbe diritto alla protezione.

La tratta delle donne

Quando riflettiamo sulla condizione delle donne vittime della tratta, non dobbiamo parlare di prostituzione bensì di schiavitù e sfruttamento.

Tra i migranti notiamo la presenza di molte donne, spesso giovanissime, in stato di gravidanza o già accompagnate dai loro figli, per le quali il viaggio è un'esperienza mortificante e devastante. Sappiamo con certezza, attraverso le molteplici testimonianze raccolte nel tempo, che la maggioranza ha subito ogni tipo di abuso, prima di tutto sessuale, da parte dei trafficanti nei quali si sono imbattute e dei quali, frequentemente, rimangono incinta.

E questo non è tutto. Molte donne riescono a raggiungere l'Europa perché inserite in uno specifico traffico di esseri umani, quello della tratta e dello sfruttamento sessuale.

L'80% delle donne nigeriane che arriva in Italia (più di 1200 nel solo 2014) è già destinata a questa vita: una donna su tre a Benin City, in Nigeria, viene avvicinata da trafficanti locali che promettono un'opportunità di lavoro o studio in Europa e viene così allontanata dalla famiglia immaginando di andare incontro ad un futuro migliore.

Secondo l'associazione "Pellegrino della Terra" di Palermo, che si occupa di aiutare le donne vittime della schiavitù, il viaggio ha un costo che si aggira intorno ai 60.000 - 70.000 euro: un debito che viene stabilito attraverso un vero e proprio contratto firmato davanti ad un avvocato, che vincola la singola ragazza ma anche tutta la famiglia.

Prima della partenza, inoltre, le donne vengono sottoposte al rito voodoo, una sorta di protezione spirituale che diventa però, in una seconda fase, una vera prigionia morale perché le ragazze che cercano a un certo punto di ribellarsi a chi le ha ridotte in condizioni di schiavitù divengono vittime di gravi minacce, spesso rivolte anche ai propri familiari.

Una volta arrivate in Italia, infine, le donne vengono consegnate a delle "madame" che appaiono come figure di riferimento e protezione, ma che in realtà sono solo un'altra pedina all'interno dell'organizzazione criminale e si occupano del loro sfruttamento: inizia così la condizione di vera e propria schiavitù delle migranti, in uno stato di grande isolamento e marginalità.

CAP.2 -" WHO HAS NEVER BEEN THERE CAN'T IMAGINE"

Interview with Doctor Pappacoda

The last but not least of our 3 meetings takes place at the Santobono hospital in Naples, where Doctor Pappacoda sees us in her emergency ward studio to tell us about her experience on the field during the landing of a raft full of migrants in the bay of Naples in the summer 2016. Her precious testimony allows us to understand how hard is to organise a landing, to welcome and to give everyone the best assistance possible.

-Hello. What's your name?

-Hi. I'm doctor Serena Pappacoda.

-Nice to meet you, doctor. Would you like to tell us about your experience with immigrants?

-Of course. So, on the 28th May 2017 a "Medici senza frontiere" ship landed in the harbour of Naples, with about 1500 migrants on it. Many of them were minors, 207 were women and 22 of them were pregnant.

-Why were you there?

-I was paged to offer first aid to the minors. I had to examine them and to check what kind of diseases they had. I said minors because I'm a paediatrician.

-What was your first impression when you got there?

-I can tell you that who's never been in that kind of situation, can't understand or even imagine. We're used to see certain things on TV, but when you see them first-hand, the feeling you get is inexplicable. The only thing you know is that it's much bigger than you and you're happy to help.

-Did you show up as a volunteer?

-I'd like to tell you I did, but I have to admit that I didn't. At first my Chief

had to go but he was out of town so someone had to replace him. Many refused to do it so eventually I was chosen.

-Which were the first operations you had to do there?

-First of all, dying patients have the priority. I remember an emaciated boy, who was about twenty years old and weighed like a ten years old child.

-So the fingerprints are taken afterwards, is that correct?

-Yes. To be honest I don't even know how it's done. I was there to take care of their health and I didn't care about anything else.

-What are the main diseases you've come across?

-Scabies, without any doubt.

-How did you feel when you visited those kids?

-All I can say is that my perspective on this phenomenon totally changed. I'm not saying that I denigrated them before but I surely didn't have an understanding of this situation so practical and concrete. I didn't realise we were and still are in the middle of a real emergency but maybe you can fully understand this phenomenon only when you experience it first-hand. Only when I went there and welcomed all those people, I understood that all those speeches done to promote the fear of the stranger, to denigrate who helps them, are not only unfounded but also speculative. They are only useful to the people who have the power because they give them the chance to get rid of the problem without solving it.

-Thank you so much, hearing you experience really helped us for our project.

-Thank you! And good luck!

https://www.epubeditor.it/uploaded11/ebook_141850/INTERVIEW_WITH_DOCTOR_PAPPA

CAP.3 - "MY NAME IS JESSICA..."

Her name is Jessica and she is 25 years old. She is a nice, pretty and really approachable and kind girl. She left her country, Nigeria, four years ago. We had the opportunity to meet her at Dedalus association in our city, Naples where she told us her story.

Why did you leave your country?

I left my country, Nigeria, to help my family. In fact here the government doesn't help anyone, especially poor people. I studied, like my brothers are doing, but in Nigeria there isn't any possibility to find a good job.

How long have you been in Italy?

I have been in Italy since 2014.

Are you here alone or do you have contacts with your family?

Yes, I came here alone four years ago to help my family, especially my little brothers. I'm always in contact with my mother but my father died years ago.

Can you tell us something about the travel?

I worked as a prostitute for a long time to find the money to leave my country. I left Nigeria and I arrived in Libya, where I worked again on the street and, after this long journey, I finally got the money to reach Italy. But, just arrived, I was forced to move to France because "Madame" (my employer) told me there wasn't work in Italy. There I met my boyfriend, who now lives in Turin, but when I got pregnant I understood that I could not continue to live like that and doing that work. My boyfriend didn't work so I decided to call my friend who lived in Naples. She told me she would help me but when I came to Italy I found myself alone. I didn't know what to do and I slept in the station. I started crying and, in that moment, I met the person who gave me the possibility to stay at Dedalus association.

What did you expect when you arrive here and how is your life now?

After seeing and suffering so much violence I was really scared when I left. I was afraid of racism, of violence, of hear people say "I don't like black people". But as soon as I arrived I understood that it is not true. All the authorities, the police, carabinieri always helped me when I needed it.

Now I am studying, I have a residence permit and I'm searching for a job. I expect to stay in Italy with my son, Nelson, who is one years old and attends the nursery school , and with my boyfriend. My dream is to became a journalist and I hope that one day I will be.



CAP.4 - COME BACK TO LIFE IN ITALY

In this interview the protagonists are the guys of the Project "ABITIAMO" , that has the aim of providing a moral and material support , also encouraging a complete social immigrant's integration.

CAP.5 - "IN LYBIA ONLY GOD CAN SAVE YOU"

In a small common room of the accommodation centre for immigrants, run by Caritas in Sorrento, we meet Sanna, a twenty years old man from Gambia who works in a local bakery. He immediately captures our attention with his smile even though, during the interview, he's not able to hide all his pain and all the cruelty he faced in his country and during his trip to Italy.

-Hi, what's your name?

-Sanna!

And he gaped into a smile full of joy.

-How long have you been living in Italy?

-For five years. In fact, five years ago I disembarked in Sicily. Subsequently I was taken to Rieti, from there I moved near Rome, then to Castellammare until I arrived in Sorrento. I've been living here for a year.

-What do you do for a living?

- I work in a bakery.

-And how do you like it so far?

-I really enjoy working there!

-Have you ever met people who had preconceptions about the colour of your skin?

-Yes, every day. It's not something you get used to very quickly but at the same time you can't stop it from happening. Some people don't even want to know who you really are.

-Where are you from?

-I'm from Gambia.

-What's the official language of your country?

-English.

-Sanna, would you like to tell us about your trip from Gambia to Italy?

-So ... I'll start by saying that there was the dictatorship in Gambia. The regime was strict and violent. So I was forced to run away. I went to Senegal first, then in Mali, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, I crossed the desert, I arrived in Lybia, prison after prison and finally I reached the sea, the same sea that led me here.

-How did you travel from a country to another?

-On foot, but once I arrived in Senegal, I had to turn to the "import-export" people. Indeed, the Presidents of the African States don't want people to run away, to emigrate. Therefore there's always the risk that some policeman finds you and brings you back home.

-Has it ever happened to you?

-Yes and I went to jail because of this. A policeman found me on the border between Niger and Burkina Faso but I was very young (I was fifteen at that time) so he let me go.

-Did you have to pay to get here?

-Absolutely not. Let's debunk the myth of immigrants who pay to reach Europe. People leave especially because they're poor; maybe there is someone who pays, but they're only a small group.

-Does the money go straight to the smugglers?

-Yes. That happens in Lybia. There is different.

A painful silence falls for a few seconds

-Let me tell you something: in Lybia only God can save you. Money's worthless there, you can pay as much as you want and there's still the possibility of being killed.

-We can see how painful it is to you to talk about Lybia so let's change topic. What impressed you the most, both negatively and positively, about Italy?

-Italy is, without any doubt, a country that welcomes. ONGs do it in the middle of the sea, accommodation centres do it, people do it. One thing I always say is that in Italy there's welcoming but not integration. And reception alone only gives you the chance to save yourself but it doesn't allow you to start a new life in a different country. I believe that if a person comes to your country it is your duty to receive them: not only they have the right to be saved but they also represent a huge resource for the country. If only politicians understood that ... but they're too focused on using the demagogy of fear to create a boundary between you and us. And it's easier for them to do this, because immigrants are defenceless, they don't even know the language. You speak, they don't understand.

-During your trip, how did the people around you behave, sympathetic or hostile?

-If I don't know you but you're clinging to life, I have the duty to save you otherwise the guilt would haunt me forever. It happened in the desert when I met a boy who couldn't stop vomiting, so I helped him. However we parted right away: I had to continue my journey alone.

-Which was the worst part of the trip?

-Lybia. Who has never been there, can't know.

While he keeps talking, we notice that he struggles with holding back the tears.

-There are various administrations in Lybia, the Tripoli one for example...?

-Lybia is full of tribes and each one of them has its own rules. They're always at war with one another. Wherever you turn your eyes to, you see twelve years old children holding rifles bigger than them, ready to die and to kill. You ask yourself: "Why do they do that?". The answer is simple: they're children who were forced to grow up too fast, who only know the logics of the war because that is the only reality they have ever lived. And in war, we

know that, the law of the stronger prevails, "I die or you die". In particular, I remember a little boy who kept yelling: "My father is dead, now it's my time to kill to avenge him!". In war you don't know who's the policeman, who's the terrorist, who's the criminal. They're all against each other and they all own weapons.

-Let's change topic. When you landed in Italy, did you take any courses?

-Yes, of course. I took many Italian lessons and I also studied to get my driving license.

-What do you think about the recent Italian elections?

-I'm not a big politicians' fan. They only care about their self-interest.

-And about what happened in Macerata?

-To me they're all the same: Nazis, racist people, ignorant people... I think they're weak, unhappy. They're not many but they make a lot of noise.

-What are your thoughts about Salvini?

-I don't know... I don't trust politicians in general.

-Have you got an ideal politician?

-Myself.

We all start laughing.

-And what would you do?

-I'd bring peace to the world.

He says so with the eyes and the look of a child who has never stopped hoping, no matter what he went through.

-We, as men, are only capable of destruction. We all fight for one reason or another but we always come out as losers.

-When you left, did you want to come to Italy?

-No! However, as I always say, I was lucky because I'm a survivor; the

majority of people who left with me didn't make it but believe me, none of them wanted to come here. Many wished to go to Germany.

-Did you want to go there as well?

-No, actually I didn't even know I was coming to Italy. I had no idea that Italy was so close to Africa: I thought it was a North European country! When I disembarked in Sicily, I thought I was in an Arabic country until some policemen spoke and said: "Italy! Italy!". Then I understood I had finally left Africa.

-Did you arrive on a raft?

-Yes. They never talk about the trip across the sea because many bad things happen there. Three days on a raft are a lot. About a hundred people get on the boat and you can't know how many will come out. The sea has become the largest cemetery of the world. They throw all kinds of numbers and data around but no one knows for sure how many people die in the middle of the sea. Neither do I and I've been there.

-Why did you decide to leave your country?

-I was arrested along with other twenty guys. I was a member of a political party called UDP. That's why I was beaten: I nearly lost an eye.

-Do you ever think of going back to Gambia to join the party?

-Yes, I do. Fortunately now the situation there is changing for the best.

-Did anyone ever warned you about what you were going to face (in Lybia for example)?

-No. I knew there was the war in Lybia but I couldn't imagine a situation like that.

-Is the whole Lybian nation the way you described it?

-Yes but the area of Zabrata is the scariest one. It was hard to accept what I've been through but forgetting it is impossible.

-We don't get a lot of informations about what happens in Lybia.

-Because they don't want the truth to come out. It's easier for them to feed the idea of the immigrant who comes here only to steal other people's jobs; all they do is to fuel a war amongst the poor. For example, when I walk the streets here in Sorrento and people notice me, they immediately start touching themselves to check if they still have their wallet on them.

-Do you have a family waiting for you in Gambia?

-Yes, my parents and my brothers.

-What do they think about your trip?

-At first they thought I had died, then I reconnected with them.

-Did you meet someone you linked with during the trip?

-Yes, three boys. One was killed in Lybia, one died at sea and the third currently lives in Germany with his new family.

-Thank you so much for your time, Sanna.

-It was a pleasure, thank you.



CAP.6 - " I OWE HIM MY LIFE"

Interview with Keita Famakan

After our chat with Sanna, we meet Keita, a Malian boy of only 18 years old and his classmates with whom he attends afternoon classes at school to improve his knowledge of the Italian language. We meet in the bar where he works but he escorts us to a more private room so that we can talk more freely; here he tells us his story and how he crossed Africa and abandoned his family when he was only fourteen, to find a better place to live.

-Hi, what's your name?

-Keita.

-Nice to meet you Keita. Would you like to speak about your trip to Italy?

-Sure. So, I left my country (Mali), when I was twelve years old. Two years later I came here.

-What's the official language of Mali?

-We speak many languages. The most important are the Bambara language and French.

-How are you getting on here in Italy?

-I'm currently doing pretty good.

-Have you always been here in Sorrento?

-No. I landed in Sicily first, then I went to Castel Sant'Angelo, then to Rieti and eventually I arrived here.

-Along with Sanna?

-Yes.

-Did you two bonded?

-Yes, but he's from Gambia.

-Are Gambia and Mali two neighbouring countries?

-Kind of. You need to cross Senegal first.

-Do you know Sanna's country?

-More or less, I've never been there.

-How's Mali like?

-There was the war in my country, it started in 2011. Fortunately now the situation is getting better although, sometimes, some armed cells execute bombings.

-You left because of the war, didn't you?

-Yes, that was the primary reason.

-Did you set off with someone?

-No, I left my country alone. My mother didn't even know I left and I lost contact with her and the rest of my family for a while.

-What about now? Did you reconnect with her?

-Yes. Luckily we talk very often on the phone.

-Are your parents happy that you're in Italy?

-My mum's very happy. My father died when I was three years old

-We're very sorry to hear that...How's your family now?

-They're fine.

-Do you expect to go back to Mali one day?

-Actually on the 9th of March I have to go take the papers so that I can go visit my family for two months.

-How was the trip to get to Lybia?

-Well ... very hard. I travelled across the desert in four days with some friends from other countries (such as Côte d'Ivoire). We got to know other people along the way; eventually, we were six people. I left from Mali, then I stayed in Algeria for eight months because I was hurt and I needed treatment before proceeding. From Algeria, I arrived in Lybia and, finally, here.

-Did you feel welcome here in Italy?

-Yes, I did. I really like it here.

-What impressed you (both positively and negatively) about Italy?

-I don't know what to say. I know I'm lucky. I was adopted by a family from Naples: I live with them from Sunday to Tuesday and then I come back here in Sorrento, where I work.

-Do you go to school?

-Yes, every day except Saturday and Sunday. Sometimes when I have to work, I go to school in the afternoon.

-What marked you the most about your trip?

-So ✨I will never forget what happened to me in Lybia, that's for sure. They put me in prison there, even though I hadn't committed any crime. Their excuse was that I didn't have a passport (despite the fact that I had all the other documents with me). I was locked in one of their prisons for eight months. We were 250 people.

-You came here by sea, is that correct?

-Yes but not by choice. When I arrived in Lybia, I immediately understood the gravity of the situation, so I asked to go back to my country but the smugglers threatened to shoot me if I didn't get on the raft. It was the first time I'd seen the sea.

-How did you manage to escape from the prison?

-They freed me, telling me that getting on the boat was the only choice I had and that I couldn't go back. Then, at that point, I thought that the

possibility of dying in the middle of the sea was better than being killed right away.

-And how was this trip?

-After four days of travelling, the raft tore and started taking water. I was the youngest and the shortest and I would have drowned if a person didn't lift me up and got me on his shoulders. I owe him my life.

-Then you managed to get to Sicily.

-Yes, even if we got lost at a certain point. Then we saw some lights and then some fishermen: at first we were afraid that we had moved backwards instead of forward and that we were still in Lybia. But some ships approached us (later I found out they were ONGs) and when we understood we were in Italy we breathed a sigh of relief.

-Did they send you to an accommodation centre after you landed?

-Yes. Well actually I stayed three days in the hospital because I was hurt and then I was taken to the accommodation centre. About the centre, I'm sorry to say that, but its conditions were disappointing. We were a lot, too many. We had to sleep together, share the food and so on.

-Did you want to come to Italy?

-No, actually I left without a precise destination. My country was troubled by war and I knew I had to run away but I didn't know where. Unfortunately, during the trip I realised that maybe it would have been better if I never left my home and that other countries were in much worse conditions than mine. But it was too late. However I was very lucky because I had the chance to come here and start a better and new life.

-Have you ever experienced racism here in Sorrento?

-Yes ... One time a boy even spit on me.

-Really?

-Yes.

-And how did you react?

-Obviously I got very upset but there wasn't much I could do. Usually people who behave this way are older than me and they always come in groups.

-How are you getting on in this community?

-Very well, because, being a bartender, I made friends. Before I used to work at the port, in a restaurant, where I experienced racism: there was a boy once, who told her girlfriend something like: "I don't like that nigger".

-What did you answer?

-Nothing. My boss came and asked me why I didn't make coffee to that couple. I told him everything and he got mad because I didn't tell him right away. However racism is present in Africa as well but here it's clearly on another level.

-Do you like school? Do you study?

-Well...

We all burst into laughter.

Let's say that there are a few subject I dislike, like geometry for example.

-What's your favourite subject?

-Italian and English: I really like languages.

-How many of them do you know?

-Let's see ... I can speak Italian, English. French, Bambara and a bit of Arabic.

-Do you like listening to Italian music?

-Yes, I listen to Fabri Fibra and Ghali.

-What do you think about Salvini?

-There's a friend of mine who is his "fan" but let's move on...

-Are there any aspects of Italy you don't like?

-Yes, I don't like racists.

-Have you bonded with someone here?

-Yes, I made lots of friends.

-Do you like Naples?

-Yes, I do but here in Sorrento I have more freedom.

-Alright, thank you for your time Keita.

-Thank you. Bye.



CAP.7 - "I FEEL ITALIAN"

Issah Iddris is a tall, curly guy. We decided to make the interview in a bar in Naples, so we met him on a beautiful Naples road. We sat in a bar and so the interview started...

Where are you from? How long have you been in Italy?

I am from Ghana, and I have been here for 2 years.

What school do you attend?

I go to Pavese middle school in 3rd grade

Why do you attend 3rd grade?

I am a bit old to go to school, but when I arrived in Italy I signed up to night school to learn Italian. I am not very good at speaking Italian but I manage with it, and this year I have been promoted and I acceded 3rd grade, even though I already attended it in Ghana. The problem is that, maybe, the exam certificate is not valid and I am going to repeat it.

Have you succeeded in getting the citizenship?

It is not easy to have it since too many immigrants are asking for it.

How is it going at school? Have you been integrated by your classmates?

It is going very well and I am very happy to go to school everyday. I have a lot of friends and we have a beautiful friendship and we go out together everyday. People in this city are very welcoming.

Do you have an hobby?

No, I do not have any hobby.

So, what do you do during the day?

In the morning, I work in a machine-shop, and in the afternoon I go to school.

Do you know other people that are in Italy as immigrants? They are doing fine as you or are they having a different kind of experience?

Yes, I know many people from Ghana. Some of them want to go back to their country but me and my friends are good here. Soft!

Where did you live in Ghana?

I lived in Koftown, a little city near the capital, Accra.

What about Ghana? Can you talk about how it's like?

I'm sorry but I really can't. I wasn't good there. I prefer Naples for sure. I think it's the best city in the world.

Don't worry, feel free not to talk about it. What you like about Naples?

I like everything about Naples: culture (even though it's a bit strange), the dialect (he talked it very well, ed), people, but most of all the cooking. I like eating pizza. Neapolitans cook good. Naples' pizza is n° 1 in the world!

So, you're saying, even keeping your country's traditions, you feel like you're italian?

Naples is a beautiful city, I would stay here all my life. I feel neapolitan.



CAP.8 - REPORTAGE FROM ETHIOPIA

Marco Nieli is an Italian teacher who worked in Ethiopia from 2011 to 2016. During his experience in Africa he had the opportunity of knowing more about Ethiopian habits and culture but in the same time he saw African problems first-hand. Ethiopia was an Italian colony during the first half of the twentieth century. Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is a federal dominant-party parliamentary republic but in reality power belongs to a small group of people: in fact Ethiopia has been dominated by a dictatorial regime lately.

Hi, Marco. Can you tell us about your experience in Ethiopia?

Good morning. I spent the last years in Addis Abeba, the capital city of Ethiopia. I worked there as a teacher but I have often visited the university too. During summer holidays I also visited other African countries with my family.

It's been an amazing experience for me to see how people live there and also my family enjoyed these journeys. It's been very interesting to meet new people who are so different from us. I also had the opportunity of seeing with my eyes the life conditions of the lower classes.

What was your work in Africa?

I taught Italian language and literature in a high school, but I also collaborated with the Italian embassy. As you know, Ethiopia has been an Italian colony for a long time and nowadays there are lots of links with Italy.

What were the life conditions in Ethiopia?

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in Africa. We lived in the capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Abeba, so the conditions were a little better, but I visited other places in this country and I saw people living in conditions of extreme poverty.

Can you tell us about Ethiopian emigration?

Ethiopian emigration is very different from the Eritrean one. In fact in Eritrea

there is a dictatorship of the proletariat but most people leave the country because of economic conditions. In Ethiopia (where there is a pseudo-dictatorial regime) the main causes of emigration are reasons of political nature.

How women live in Ethiopia?

Well, the power in family belongs to the father, but in the same time women are respected. I saw lots of villages where old women are considered to have something like a magical power. On the other side, the strict principles of the Coptic religion force many girls to become nuns and to close themselves in a convent to never go out again.

However, women are generally treated with respect as mother and caretaker of the house. After all human life was born in Africa thanks to them.

CAP.9 - THE ROLE OF FRONTEX IN ILLEGAL BORDER CROSSING

The year 2017, saw a significant fall in the detections of illegal border-crossing along the EU's external borders. This was mainly due to a drop in detections on the Eastern and Central Mediterranean migratory routes. The sudden plunge in the number of irregular migrants reaching Italy in mid2017 was the most noteworthy development at the external borders of the EU since the implementation of the EU-Turkey statement in March 2016. Nevertheless, the overall pressure on Europe's external borders remained relatively high, and the Western Mediterranean route saw the highest number of irregular migrants since Frontex began systematically collecting data in 2009. The increase became pronounced in the second half of the year when the number of nationals from the Maghreb countries rose significantly. For the first time, the European Border and Coast Guard regulation clearly states that 'the management of the external borders is a shared responsibility of the Union and the Member States'. As a result, the Agency acts as the operational arm of the EU, and a partner for the Member States. Frontex is a cornerstone of the EU's area of freedom, security and justice. To help Europe better prepare for future challenges at its external borders, Frontex has begun conducting vulnerability assessments in Member States and already shared its first findings with national authorities. Their presence in the Member States will further illustrate that national authorities and the Agency together create the European Border and Coast Guard. The Agency has also taken on new tasks to help combat cross-border crime. Officers deployed by Frontex have helped Member States arrest hundreds of suspected facilitators and detect fraudulent documents. Combatting document fraud and targeting the organized crime groups that are involved in producing fake and fraudulent documents are among the Agency's priorities. These actions have a direct impact on the internal security of the EU as detection of document fraud, along with sharing intelligence collected at the external borders, is a key tool in combatting the terrorist threat. Frontex is more involved than ever in different stages of migration management in the EU. The Agency has taken large leaps in the area of returns to become an essential actor in law enforcement on the

European level. A key element of successful migration management is cooperation with the countries of origin and transit of migrants. In 2017, Frontex deployed additional liaison officers to non-EU countries – Niger and Serbia. The agency also has a liaison officer in Turkey. The sea, especially along the Mediterranean routes, will remain the most active path for illegal crossing of the EU external borders, but also one of the most dangerous for migrant smuggling requiring humanitarian assistance efforts. Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, is leading the way to enhance the cooperation among various maritime security players, leading to additional coordination in search and rescue efforts, as well as other coast guard functions related to border control. As a result, border control authorities are increasingly involved in detection of cross border crimes, such as drug trafficking and smuggling of excise goods, but also the detection of pollution and illegal fishing. Together with its many partners, the growing European Border and Coast Guard Agency remains committed to tackling the many challenges outlined in this report, helping ensure security of Europe's external borders, EU Member States and European citizens.

For the second year in a row after the record year of 2015, Member States reported a significant decrease in the numbers of detections of illegal border-crossing along the EU's external borders. This decrease mostly resulted from the lower number of detections recorded on the Eastern Mediterranean, the Western Balkan and the Central Mediterranean routes.

Central Mediterranean route

The number of irregular migrants detected on the Central Mediterranean route at the beginning of 2017 roughly mirrored that seen at the beginning of 2016, with fluctuations very much dependent on weather conditions in the winter months. A variety of factors, notably internal developments in Libya, are deemed to be the cause, not a decline in the pool of migrants looking to use the route. Hence, a fall of 34% compared with 2016 was reported, meaning that the Central Mediterranean still recorded by far the largest number of irregular migrants. Migrants were increasingly prevented from departing from Libya. At the same time, but unrelated to the decrease in the flow from Libya, more Tunisians and Algerians embarked boats in their respective countries and headed to Sicily and Sardinia.



Eastern Mediterranean route

At the EU's external border with Turkey, the migratory pressure in 2017 remained roughly on a level with the months after the implementation of the EU-Turkey statement. But, strengthened controls on the Western Balkan route and both the number of people stuck on the Hotspot islands and the Greek mainland and/or their waiting time means that the amount of document fraud detections at Greek air borders to Western Europe increased.

Black Sea route

The Black Sea route was temporarily used in 2017, with 537 migrants detected on the Black Sea between August and November, accounting for the highest number of migrants ever detected on this route since 2009. Western Balkan route The flow of migrants across the Western Balkans continued to somewhat reflect the influx on the Eastern Mediterranean route, yet at a lower level compared with previous years given the continuing efforts made on the route to curb the flow. The detected illegal border-crossings at the EU's external border mostly took place at the Serbian borders, with many migrants stranded in Serbia known to make several attempts to cross, often at different border sections.



Western Mediterranean route

The numbers of migrants detected on the Western Mediterranean route hit a new record high in 2017, more than doubling the previous record of last year. While during much of the first half of the year the numbers were on a par with those reported during the last months of 2016, the flow reached new levels in June 2017. In the latter part of the year, the observed increased usage of rubber dinghies east of the Strait of Gibraltar – used by sub-Saharan migrants – suggests increased activity of people smuggling networks, as the dinghies and the required engines are unlikely to have been procured by the (mostly sub-Saharan) migrants themselves.

Western African route

On the Western African route, the 421 detected irregular migrants represent the lowest number since 2015. The low number on the route connecting Senegal, Mauritania and Morocco with the Spanish Canary Islands is a success to be attributed to the Memorandum of Understanding between Spain, Senegal and Mauritania, which continued to deliver joint surveillance activities and effective returns of people detected crossing the border illegally. Eastern land border route In 2017, the Eastern land border reported the lowest number of illegal border crossings since the inception of FRAN data collection. In particular, at the land borders with Russia the numbers dropped, indicating that the Russian authorities are continuing good cooperation with the respective Member States' local authorities. More than one-third of detected migrants were Vietnamese citizens.

